

# TIP OF THE SPEAR

## SOF responds to Haitian earthquake

- ♣ 10th SFG (A) Soldiers recount battle in Uzbin Valley
- ♣ SOF hosts exercise Cold Response in Norway
- ♣ Portable ultrasound machines empower SF medics



# U.S. SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND



**SOF help Haitian earthquake victims.....4 - 11**

## Tip of the Spear



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*Front cover: A pararescueman from the 23rd Special Tactics Squadron, Hurlburt Field, Fla., and members of various rescue teams climb a ladder to get to a 25-year-old woman who was trapped in a collapsed building for seven days, Jan. 19, in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. U.S. Department of Defense forces assets deployed to assist in the relief effort under way after a 7.0-magnitude earthquake hit the city Jan. 12. Photo by Tech. Sgt. James Harper Jr.*

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## SOF AROUND THE WORLD - HAITI SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND – SOUTH



An aerial view shows Toussaint Louverture International Airport in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, January 23. Aircraft from around the world would fly in to drop off humanitarian aid. Haitian people were also flown from the airport to medical facilities in the United States after the devastating earthquake that struck the country Jan. 12. Photo by Staff Sgt. Desiree Palacios.

# 23rd STS combat controllers bring order after chaotic Haiti earthquake

*By Senior Airman David Salantri  
AFSOC Public Affairs*

It was 1:30 in the morning Jan. 13 when Tech. Sgt. Chris Grove answered the phone call that shaped the next two weeks of his life.

Just hours after taking that call, Grove and his nine-person team of combat controllers from the 23rd Special Tactics Squadron Hurlburt Field, Fla., were deploying to Port-au-Prince, Haiti, in response to the earthquake.

Living up to their motto, “first there,” the Air Force Special Operations Command combat controllers arrived at the Toussaint L’Ouverture International Airport around 6 p.m. Jan. 13 with much work ahead of them.

One of the first tasks at hand for the team was to conduct a runway assessment.

“We had to determine the extent of damage to the runway as well as the control tower,” said Tech. Sgt. Joseph Hepler, on the 23rd STS combat controller team.

Their assessment concluded the runway was safe. The tower was damaged and unsafe for use. The runway lights were operational, so the ramp was capable of 24-hour operations, but there was little movement at the airport. The parking ramp, designed to safely accommodate up to 12 aircraft, was now gridlocked with 42 aircraft of varying sizes, parked nose-to-nose and under each other's wings.

Within 28 minutes of landing in Haiti, the team of combat controllers took full control of air operations in the theater.

"We set up the air traffic control point in a field with our equipment propped up on our ATV," said Grove, the airfield team leader. "For the first two days we had no tables, no chairs, just our ATV and the ground to conduct air traffic control from."

With an overpacked airport, the combat controllers had to figure out a way to overcome this challenge.

"We developed a rotation called the Haitian maneuver," Grove said. "When an aircraft landed we would have it continue on to pass the taxiway, then bring it in just as another aircraft was departing, creating a one-for-one swap."

From total congestion and nose-to-nose parking upon arrival, the team of combat controllers turned chaos into order.

"This isn't the first time we've shown up somewhere with nothing but our radios and had to bring order and control to a chaotic situation," Grove said. "We've had to do this several times in Afghanistan and throughout the area of responsibility."

According to the 23rd STS team they brought in 1,675 aircraft and 830 helicopters in the 12 days they were there.



**Combat controllers from 23rd Special Tactics Squadron, Hurlburt Field, Fla., talk to aircraft circling the Port-Au-Prince International Airport. In the initial days of Operation Unified Response air operations were similar to the Berlin Airlift with aircraft landing every five minutes. Photo by Staff Sgt. Desiree Palacios.**

"I have been fortunate to have been the 'first in' on several occasions," said Chief Master Sgt. Antonio Travis, the special tactics team lead. "I have had the honor to work with the finest men and organizations in the world. Nothing has been as rewarding as the two

weeks controlling the Port-au-Prince airfield in support of Operation Unified Response."

"There's a sense of helping somebody out when doing an operation like this, and I think you get more self-satisfaction out of it," Grove said. "The caliber of the guys going down there was what made this happen."

"I have never been more proud of what I do and the decisions I have made over my career than watching the bar raised in Haiti by the special tactics Airmen and 1st Special Operations Wing," Travis said. "I have thought how to put into words how I feel as a leader. Every angle I look at leads to a single one word answer: humbled."

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*There's a sense of helping somebody out when doing an operation like this, and I think you get more self-satisfaction out of it.*

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*— Tech. Sgt. Chris Grove*

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# Civil Affairs makes a difference in Haiti following massive earthquake

*By Special Operations Command South Public Affairs*

Following the aftermath of the massive 7.0 earthquake that struck the Caribbean nation of Haiti on Jan. 12, Civil Affairs Soldiers from Fort Bragg, N.C. were on the ground working to help the citizens of Haiti.

The first Civil Affairs elements began to arrive in the country within 24 hours following the disaster that killed hundreds of thousands of Haitians, while leaving thousands more injured and displaced.

Humanitarian Assistance Coordination Center leadership and a Civil Military Support Element from Trinidad and Tobago were the first civil affairs soldiers on the ground to provide assistance.

Once on the ground, the HACC leadership began coordinating with key leaders from the Government of Haiti, United States Agency for International Development, World Food Program, State Department, and MINUSTAH (United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti) to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian assistance throughout the country.

“Building relationships with these organizations was key to the HACC’s success,” said Lt. Col. J.T. Stevens, officer in charge of the HACC.

Stevens is the battalion commander of the 98th Civil Affairs Battalion (Airborne), an element of the United States Army Special Operations Command.

During relief efforts, Joint Task Force-Haiti adopted a “whole government” approach which Stevens said would allow the Department of Defense and Department of State to integrate and maximize capabilities.

“With this approach, we are more effective when we work hand-in-hand with partner agencies like USAID and the State Department. Our goal is to facilitate and support the international humanitarian community,” said Stevens.

The JTF-Haiti HACC and Civil Affairs teams providing relief support were composed of members representing all military components. These special operations service members have extensive training in language and cultural awareness that accelerates the



*Lt. Col. J.T. Stevens talks with a Haitian boy before he is transported from a Project Medishare field hospital in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, Jan. 28, to a mobile aeromedical staging facility and then to the Military Sealift Command hospital ship USNS Comfort (T-AH 20). The boy was treated for severe burns on his legs, resulting from the earthquake that hit Haiti Jan. 12, 2010. Photo by Tech. Sgt. Victoria Meyer.*

delivery of aid.

“What our soldiers are capable of is extraordinary, and we want the other agencies to see our value so we can support them with whatever they need, be it logistics, security or transportation, when they’re out distributing aid,” Stevens said. “We want to demonstrate that the sole intent of our military presence on the ground is to assist with our resources to meet the urgent needs of the people and government of Haiti.”

In order to advise on the proper distribution of basic necessities to the Haitian people, the CMSE conducted various civil assessments in and around the Haitian capital of Port-au-Prince in order to help coordinate JTF-Haiti humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations throughout the torn nation.

The CMSE provided assessments on quake damage through civil reconnaissance missions in Port-au-Prince and also assisted the Department of State with identification of

U.S. citizens affected by the earthquake. In one remarkable occasion, a CMSE team member delivered a baby while assisting in relief operations during the first couple of days of the deployment.

CA Soldiers also provided hospital assessments and gathered information from the locals in order to properly determine locations of aid distribution sites to be established. The assessments proved critical as they allowed Haitian officials, USAID, MINUSTAH and NGOs to distribute food and water at various distribution sites around Port Au Prince within days of the quake.

As more Soldiers reached Haiti, the attention turned north of the capital. With three CA teams attached to assist Paratroopers of the 82nd Airborne Division's 2nd Brigade Combat Team with humanitarian assistance in Port-au-Prince, CA teams under the Joint Forces Special Operations Component Command headed to the northern cities of Cap Hatien, Hinch, Gonaives, and St. Marc, and the western city of Jeremie where displaced citizens began to settle.

As this phase of the operation took shape, CA soldiers worked with officials and various NGOs to help facilitate the distribution of food and medical aid to thousands of displaced Haitians in the remote cities and towns spread throughout Haiti's countryside.

For Army CA leaders working north of the capital, the focus was to ensure assistance was provided to the people who needed it most.

"The food distribution is a promising step in the right direction, though organizations need to be prepared for long-term solutions as well," said an Army Civil Affairs team leader based out of the city of Hinche. "We're trying to make sure NGOs and the local government work together to request assistance through the system the United Nations has in place so we get the right aid and assistance to those in need."

Along with facilitating humanitarian efforts, CA teams bridged a gap between different agencies to synchronize certain relief efforts.

"I'm glad we were able to connect different organizations that are doing so much good here [Haiti], and now we are seeing the effects that these organizations are providing for so many in need," added the CA team leader. "It's very encouraging."

The U.S. military continued to assist NGOs, the U.N., and other agencies with the delivery of humanitarian aid throughout February. However, as coordination efforts continued to improve between the government and civilian

agencies, CA teams were reaching an awareness of their diminishing roles.

The first signs of this took place during a humanitarian mission on Feb. 26 in Port-au-Prince. A U.S. Army CA team along with Paratroopers from the 82nd Airborne Division, partnered with the non-governmental organization "Tzu-Chi," a Taiwan-based aid organization, to assist the delivery of blankets and temporary shelter for more than 2,000 citizens in Port-au-Prince. As the mission commenced, NGO representatives took charge of the operation. It was a sight many CA Soldiers welcomed.

"We fill in where we can to assist them, but then we step back and let them lead the effort," said Mike, a CA team leader and Army officer. "These organizations are becoming more capable, and they are increasingly helping more people, and that's going to make an impact in the long term."

As the U.S. military's footprint continued to decrease by early March, CA personnel had played a hand in the facilitation and delivery of thousands of pounds worth of food, clean water, medical supplies, tents, cots, and other basic services, to assist the earthquake-ravaged Haitian people on their road to recovery.

For CA Soldiers who had been on the ground in Haiti for more than a month, observing the increasing improvement of conditions brought a sense of satisfaction.

"Things are not perfect for the residents, and certainly they have a long way to go, but they have access to medical aid, shelter, and food," said a CA non-commissioned officer. "The NGOs have good coordination with these camps, and people are getting access to things they need."

Mike also added that a sense of normalcy was returning to the country.

"You see many people going back to work, or engaging in activities other than worrying about food, water, and shelter," he said. "There is a sense that some things are returning to normal, and those are good signs."

CA leaders acknowledge there is plenty more work to be done in Haiti, but as they transition their mission over to aid agencies and NGOs, these Soldiers said that they feel satisfaction knowing they did their small part in making things a little better for citizens in Port Au Prince and across the Haitian nation.

"This has been a very rewarding mission," said Mike. "Our Soldiers know they are making a difference, and we see it every time we go out."



**SOF AROUND THE WORLD - HAITI**  
**SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND - SOUTH**

# 193rd part of Unified Response

*By Airman 1st Class Claire Behney  
193rd SOW Public Affairs*

When the Haitian's' world shook, the 193rd Special Operations Wing, Pennsylvania Air National Guard, responded.

The 7.0 magnitude earthquake that hit the Port-au-Prince area Jan. 12 devastated southern Haiti and Jan. 14 three aircraft and more than 50 Airmen of the 193rd deployed on a humanitarian mission in support of the relief efforts in Haiti.

Two C-130Js and one EC-130J Commando Solo deployed in support of this mission. Staged outside the devastation area, the aircraft flew for a combined total of 508.7 flying hours while deployed from Jan. 14 to March 15.

“Our first flight in there (Haiti) was just a few days after it happened, so we were pretty much there at the forefront when everything first started,” said C-130 pilot Matthew. (For the purposes of operational security, last names were withheld.)

The C-130Js delivered relief supplies to the people of Haiti. The aircraft loaded supplies at their staged location and flew into the local airport of Haiti. Once the aircraft landed, the supplies were unloaded and the aircraft and crew departed to reload and continue with the cycle. This cycle lead to the delivery of 118.5 tons of cargo.

“We took supplies ranging from water, to HUMVEES, to extension cords, as well as some personnel,” said Matthew, who was deployed for three weeks in support of Operation Unified Response. “Over the whole trip we probably hauled about 250 Americans back to the states.”

Matthew said through interactions with the Americans the aircraft transported back to the United States he learned of their great appreciation for what the wing was doing.

“They said that it was pretty backed up getting out of Haiti and that they waited in line for hours,” said Matthew. “Some people were even turned away and told to come back at a later date, so they were thankful for the ride.”

While the mission of the C-130 was to transport supplies and personnel, the mission of the Commando Solo was about transmission.

The Commando Solo's mission was to fly over the

devastation area broadcasting information regarding relief efforts to the people of Haiti through FM and AM frequencies.

“We're doing what's called a real-time relay,” said Aaron, an airborne communications system operator. “Voice of America broadcasts out of the United States from multiple locations, primarily the east coast and southeast coast of the U.S. and we receive it on the airplane and then rebroadcast it on the different frequencies.”

Commando Solo broadcasted the VOA messages on five different frequencies in French-Creole, the native language of Haiti, Aaron said.

The Haitian government advises what messages are broadcast to its people. The messages are primarily about health concerns, where to find water, and non-interference messages, advising Haitian's to not interfere with the help coming to them, said Aaron.

This mission marks the first time Commando Solo has provided direct support of humanitarian aid.

“It's a great opportunity to get in and do what we can to help since it is a very versatile platform as far as what we are capable of doing,” said Aaron. “It's also a great testament to the unit that we are able to go down there and help the people out when they need it.”



*A forklift operator places a pallet of relief supplies into the cargo area of an 193rd Special Operations Wing C-130 as the crew prepares the aircraft for a flight into Haiti's airport. Photo by Tech. Sgt. Victoria Meyer.*

# NSWG 2 Seabees provide electricity to Cap-Haitian orphanage

By Chief Petty Officer Robert Fluegel  
JFSOCC Public Affairs

Navy Seabees assigned to Naval Special Warfare Group 2, Logistics and Support Unit brought much-needed lights and electricity to a new orphanage in the northern city of Cap-Haitian Feb. 19.

Petty Officer 1st Class Phillip Brown and Petty Officer 2nd Class Andy Kauffold worked for five days on an electrical project that brought lights and electrical outlets to the orphanage, which provides shelter for displaced children after the 7.0-magnitude earthquake hit Port-au-Prince Jan. 12.

“Being able to provide electricity to these kids was a rewarding experience,” Kauffold said. “I will remember my time here for the rest of my life.”

This one of three orphanages owned and operated by the Eternal Hope in Haiti Foundation. They provide shelter, food, medical care and education to medically fragile and critically ill orphans..

“The support of the military, specifically the Seabees dedicated to the orphanage, has been instrumental in ensuring we can provide a loving, nurturing home for many children displaced as a result of the earthquake in Port-au-Prince,” said Angie Haynes, vice president, Eternal Hope in Haiti Foundation. Haynes is also a nurse practitioner who has volunteered her time at local clinics for the past 25 years in Cap-Haitian.

Prior to the Seabee's project, the construction site for the orphanage was not fully prepared to accept abandoned or recovering children from Port-au-Prince. Now the site includes access to water and electricity, and the orphanage has electrical outlets and lights for the children.

“It was good to see the smiles on the children's faces when the lights came on,” Brown said. “We’re here to help



**Petty Officer 1st Class Phillip Brown, assigned to Naval Special Warfare Logistical Support Unit 2, prepares an electrical box for wiring during an improvement project at a local orphanage in Cap-Haitian. Several U.S. and international military and non-governmental agencies are conducting humanitarian and disaster relief operations as part of Operation Unified Response after a 7.0-magnitude earthquake caused severe damage in and around Port-au-Prince, Haiti Jan. 12. Chief Petty Officer Robert Fluegel.**

in whatever way is needed. It feels good to help.”

The Seabees also ran underground wire to other buildings that will be used as a medical clinic and a kitchen.

As a result all of the work the Seabees did to get the orphanage operating the orphanage has now accepted about 20 children from Port-au-Prince and is awaiting another 32 children who are recovering post-operation patients at the local hospital.

The foundation continues to identify children in need and place them in the appropriate orphanage.

“We are truly grateful and humbled to have enjoyed the support of the U.S. military,” Haynes said.



# Haitian-born MARSOC Marines' language skills aid Haiti effort

By 2nd Lt. Victoria Brayton  
JFSOCC Public Affairs

When Marine Staff Sgt. Michel Leandre Jr. arrived in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, just six days after the devastating Jan. 12 earthquake, he probably felt a more personal connection than most of the other U.S. service members who came to help.

Leandre was born and raised in Port-au-Prince for the first six years of his life. Many of his family members still live in the capital city of Haiti. Aunts, uncles, cousins—all were directly affected by the earthquake.

“It was hard seeing my family sleeping outside on the floor,” he said. “My uncle, he lost everything. My aunt, her house was destroyed.”

Leandre, a contracting officer for the Marine Special Operations Command, hadn't stepped foot in Haiti since he left almost 25 years ago. Now he's back, working as an interpreter and traveling with civil affairs teams all around Haiti to help find out what the people need and how the various international and state organizations can be of assistance.

“Anything I can do to help, I'll do it,” he said.

Walking along the streets in his Marine Corps uniform, Leandre is met with cheers and hugs.

“Kids run and hug you, they grab your leg,” he said, smiling. “I tell them in Creole, ‘I'm Haitian, just like you,’ and they get even more excited.”

Leandre said he thinks he gives the locals an example of another possibility for the future.

“My family really loves it, saying ‘my nephew is a U.S. Marine,’” he said. “They get a kick out of it.”

This mission to support the humanitarian assistance efforts has been rewarding for Leandre as well, who said his language skills have gotten stronger.

“I'm learning from the people just like the people are learning from me,” he said. “They'll talk in English and I'll answer in Creole. That way we help each other out.”

Another MARSOC Marine, Sgt. Mark, (who requested only his first name be used) said he had a feeling when he

took the test for language proficiency that one day he would be called upon to use his language abilities.

Mark was also born in Haiti, and hadn't returned since he moved to the United States when he was 3 years old.

Normally a supply administrator for the 3rd Marine Special Operations Battalion, Mark said he was excited by the chance to be an interpreter for U.S. service members in Haiti.

“Even if I didn't grow up here, I still have a place in my heart for Haiti and its people,” he said. “I'm happy to do whatever I can do to help.”

Mark said visiting the hospitals around Haiti has been particularly inspiring for him.

“They're not fully equipped with supplies, but they're doing everything they can to get by while the assistance is on its way,” he said.

Both Marines said they were proud and ready to use their language skills to help the humanitarian efforts in Haiti, and that as U.S. service members they've been heartily welcomed by the local population.

“They sense hope and change is coming,” Leandre said. “We're just here to give support and to do what we can.”



**A homeless elderly woman is found living on the street by Marine interpreter Staff Sgt. Michel Leandre Jr., a MARSOC Marine assigned to the Joint Forces Special Operations Component Command in Haiti. Leandre who was born in Haiti and speaks Creole, gives her Meal Ready to Eat. Photo by Chief Petty Officer Robert Fluegel.**

# Haitian-American Marine receives promotion while in Port-au-Prince

By Lt. Arlo Abrahamson  
JFSOCC Public Affairs

A Haitian-American Marine working with the Joint Forces Special Operations Component Command in Haiti had the unique experience of being promoted to Gunnery Sergeant in front of family and friends in his hometown, March 1st, during a ceremony in Port-au-Prince.

Gunnery Sgt. Michel Leandre, who was born in Haiti but moved to the U.S. when he was six, volunteered to deploy with U.S. Special Operation Forces as a Creole interpreter after the devastating earthquake, January 12th.

For Leandre, circumstances and timing provided him an opportunity to assist the people of Haiti during humanitarian relief operations, and then be promoted in the city of his birth; an experience that would have seemed unimaginable for this Marine logistics technician just months before.

“This is very personal for me,” said Leandre. “My mission here has been to help fellow service members communicate better with the people, because I know the culture and the language. But to pause today and be promoted to Gunny in front of my family and friends is something I never imagined would happen and will never forget.”

Danemarck Jacques, Leandre’s uncle and part time resident of Port-au-Prince, said he’s not surprised to see his nephew being promoted up the ranks of the Marine Corps so quickly, or to hear about the important role he is playing in supporting SOF Civil Affairs teams



**Staff Sgt. Michel Leandre Jr., a Haitian American U.S. Marine with Joint Forces Special Operations Component Command receives his Gunnery Sgt. pins from his uncle and cousin in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. The United States military, other international military and civilian aid agencies are conducting humanitarian and disaster relief operations as part of Operation Unified Response in the aftermath of the earthquake that hit the area on Jan. 12, 2010. Photo by Chief Petty Officer Robert Fluegel.**

working in Haiti.

“Michel was always a strong and focused person, even when he was young,” said Jacques. “We are proud of his promotion today, but even more proud that he’s here helping Haitian’s during this difficult time.”

With the joy of accomplishing a major milestone in his Marine Corps career, Leandre now focuses his attention back on the mission of helping people through his language skills.

“I always feel like there’s more I can do,” said Leandre. “The people here have gone through so much. When I talk to Haitian’s in the street, they often tell me, ‘we’re glad you’re here, you provide us with a little bit of hope for our future.’”



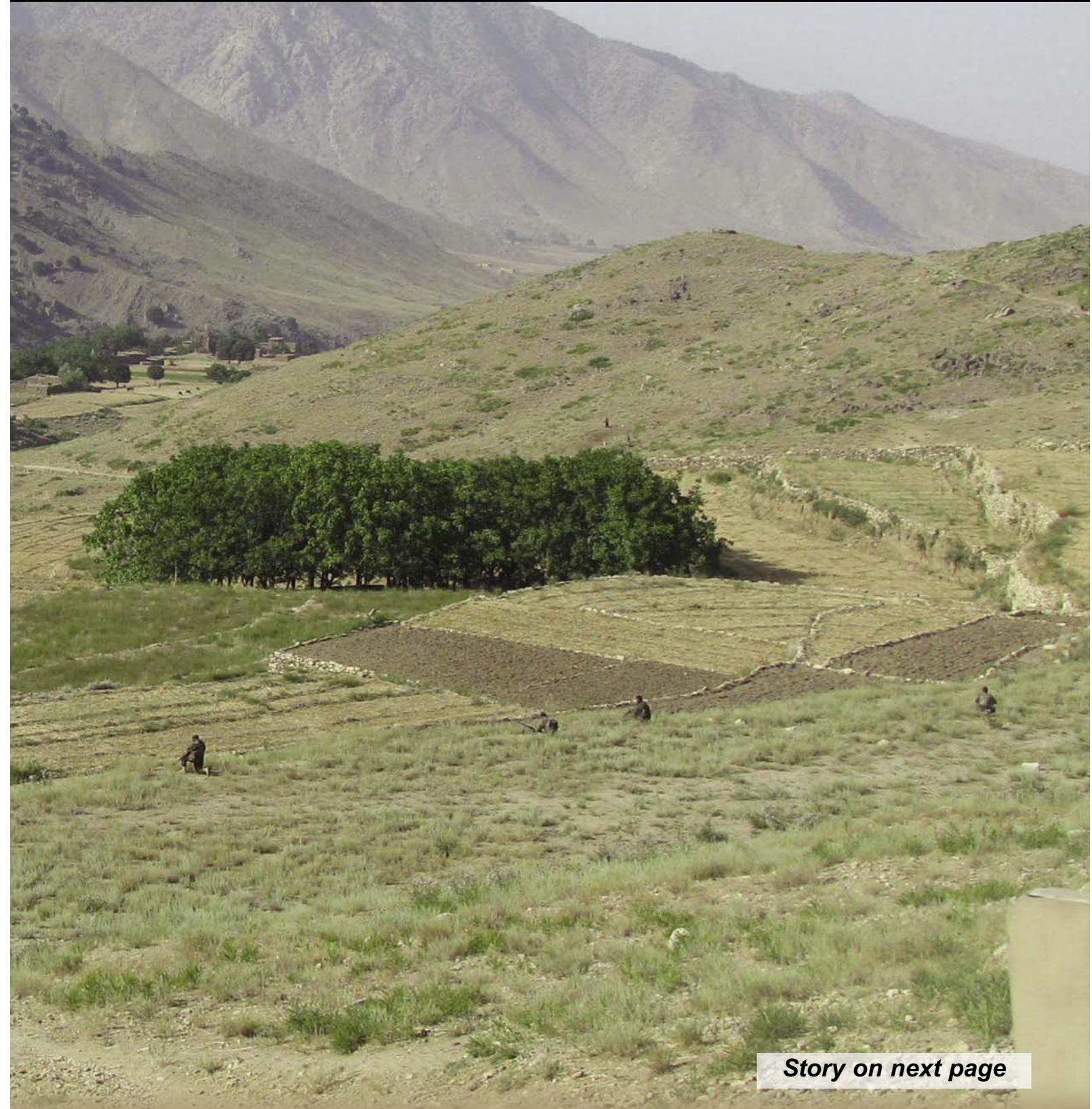
**SOF AROUND THE WORLD - AFGHANISTAN**  
**COMBINED JOINT SPECIAL OPERATIONS**  
**TASK FORCE – AFGHANISTAN**

# Brotherhood forged in combat

By Maj. Jim Gregory  
SOCEUR Public Affairs



*Soldiers from 1st Battalion, 10th Special Forces Group (Airborne) in the foreground move tactically toward the vegetated area where the July 29 firefight occurred. 1st Battalion, 10th Special Forces Group (Airborne) photo.*



***Story on next page***



## SOF AROUND THE WORLD - AFGHANISTAN COMBINED JOINT SPECIAL OPERATIONS TASK FORCE – AFGHANISTAN

Within the fraternity of Army Special Forces, the brotherhood formed during the Qualification Course in the woods of Camp Mackall, N.C. can only be sealed in one way – through combat.

The men of 1st Battalion, 10th Special Forces Group (Airborne) gathered on the morning of Feb. 4 at Panzer Kaserne, Germany, to recognize the courage of three men who sealed the bond of brotherhood during the course of surviving two close ambushes in Afghanistan. Staff Sergeants Ryan Stovall and Jarred Shewey and Sgt. 1st Class Justin Aflague were each awarded the Bronze Star Medal with Valor. Stovall was additionally awarded the Army Commendation Medal for Valor and two Purple Hearts. Not present due to school attendance was Sgt. 1st Class Sean Laske, who received the Bronze Star for Valor as well.

On the morning of July 29, 2009, the team of Green Berets, along with U.S. Marine Corps elements and Afghan National Army soldiers, conducted a patrol into the northern Uzbun Valley, northeast of Kabul. The patrol was to include visits with key leadership in several Afghan villages along the way. As they approached one of the villages known to be hostile, they dismounted their vehicles to clear a vegetated area.

“We had visited Bomdalay (a neighboring village) earlier, and word travels fast in Afghanistan about Coalition forces moving through the area,” said Stovall, “so we wanted to try to catch them coming out the back of Sra Qalah as we approached.”

The team not only caught insurgents coming out of the back of the village, they walked into a coordinated close ambush hidden in the vegetated area.

“It was hectic to say the least,” said Stovall, who received some AK-47 shrapnel in his leg during the initial volley of fire, “but you don’t think about it, you just react and do what you’ve got to do.”

The team did react, and they were able to defeat

those who chose to engage them, killing three high-ranking enemy commanders and more than a dozen enemy fighters.

Unfortunately, during the battle, Chief Warrant Officer Doug Vose was seriously wounded by enemy machine-gun fire.

Aflague was the first to reach Vose after he was hit and immediately started providing first aid. After Stovall, the patrol’s medic, arrived to take over treatment of Vose, Aflague continued to provide chest compressions with one hand while simultaneously directing supporting fires onto enemy positions via radio with his other hand. When not on the radio or providing chest compressions, Aflague engaged the enemy with Stovall’s machine gun.

“Everyone knew what they needed to do,” said Aflague. “Ryan had positioned ANA to cover our flank and was working on Doug. Jarred was firing toward another flank to prevent our position from being overrun, and I was plugging holes wherever needed.”

Within 25 minutes, the air medevac bird landed on the hot landing zone and extracted Vose, who succumbed to his wounds en route to the hospital.

“We were devastated,” said Stovall. Aflague added, “I might as well have lost one of my own flesh and blood.”



**Chief Warrant Officer Doug Vose**

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*“Every single one of these men put themselves in harm’s way because their brothers were in danger.”*

*— Major Gen. Frank Kisner*

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But the team recovered. Stovall's leg healed quickly, and, slightly more than a month later, the detachment was conducting another reconnaissance mission in the Laghman province, where they encountered the enemy at close range once again.

After sundown on the evening of Sept. 4, the detachment prepared for air extraction from a hilltop where they were observing an insurgent leadership meeting. Just after midnight, 15 minutes before the scheduled extraction, insurgents opened fire on their patrol from four directions, leading with RPG rounds.

Reacting quickly, Stovall and Laske, the team's intelligence sergeant, promptly returned fire on multiple enemy positions located approximately 150 meters east of the patrol. As they maneuvered to gain a better position on the enemy, Stovall was hit in the leg – the same leg as before – and Laske was struck four times – once in the hand, twice in the helmet and once in the rear plate of his body armor.

Stovall didn't have time to think about his wounds. "I realized my leg wasn't working very well, but there wasn't any pain – a little discomfort maybe – but no pain," he said.

Ignoring intense machine-gun fire, Laske and Stovall, despite their wounds, continued to flank the enemy and engage hostile positions, which allowed the rest of the patrol to mass fires and eventually halt the enemy's advance. Only at this point could Stovall tend to Laske's and his own wounds as the rest of the team prepared for extraction.

With French Tiger gunships providing air support and a French Caracal helicopter arriving on a hot landing zone to pick them up, the team once again prevailed during an intense firefight in the face of a determined and numerically superior enemy.

"Every single one of these men put themselves in harm's way because their brothers were in danger," said Maj. Gen. Frank Kisner, commander of United States Special Operations Command Europe. "It's a bond that's hard to comprehend, but it's what makes Special Forces so critical, so important, so much of a national treasure."



*Maj. Gen. Frank Kisner, commander of Special Operations Command, Europe, (right), shakes the hand of Staff Sgt. Jarred Shewey during a 1/10th Special Forces Group valor ceremony Feb. 4. Kisner presented Bronze Star Medals to Sgt. 1st Class Justin Aflague (from left), Shewey and Staff Sgt. Ryan Stovall for their heroic actions in combat during an ISAF mission in Afghanistan. Photo by Susan Huseman.*



## SOF AROUND THE WORLD

### JOINT SPECIAL OPERATIONS TASK FORCE – PHILIPPINES

# JSOTF – P give RHIB trainers to AFP

By Lt.j.g. Theresa Donnelly  
JSOTF-P Public Affairs

Members of the Joint Special Operations Task Force - Philippines recently trained 14 members of the Armed Forces of the Philippines on four 11-meter long Naval Special Warfare Rigid Hull-Inflatable Boats during a course at Naval Base Cavite, Philippines.

Because terrorism and other lawless activity takes place frequently throughout the waterways where the Naval Special Operations Unit operates, it is imperative they know how to perform missions using these boats.

The six-week course is designed to give students follow-on training the Philippine government purchased in July 2009 from the U.S. Maritime Institute. These are the first 11-meter RHIBs purchased for use by NAVSOU. Initially, the Naval Special Operations Group sailors were internally trained by the AFP on basic craft operation, maintenance and navigation.

At that point, JSOTF-P's Task Force Archipelago was asked to conduct an advanced, detailed course at Cavite similar to the training a Special Warfare Combatant-craft Crewman receives.

"The people going through this course now will become trainers themselves now that they are experts on the boats. After the class, they will then go back to their respective units and train others on what they learned here," said the JSOTF-P Navy SEAL officer-in-charge.

While going through the training, students learned different parts of boat operation and mission execution, such as mission planning, schematics of the boat, night navigation, medical training (if someone is injured while



**Armed Forces of the Philippines Navy SEALs climb up a caving ladder to reach AFP Navy logistics support vessel BRP Dagupan City (LC-551) during a Maritime Interdiction Operation exercise. Members of Joint Special Operation Task Force-Philippines Special Boat Team trained 14 members of the AFP's Navy Special Operations Group on how to perform missions using four newly-acquired 11-meter-long Naval Special Warfare Rigid Hull Inflatable Boats. Photo by Lt.j.g. Theresa Donnelly.**

riding), weapons employment and how to perform maintenance to keep the boats fully operational.

Since military subject matter expert exchanges are one of the key mission capabilities of JSOTF-P, sharing this knowledge and enhancing the skill sets of the NAVSOU was an honor for the East coast based Special Boat Team.

"The AFP's Navy SEALs did a great job during this class. Their motivation to receive this knowledge is great. I was continuously impressed with their enthusiasm and commitment to the training. I am fully comfortable with their ability to operate the boat," said JSOTF-P's RHIB detachment leading chief petty officer.

Upon completion of the training, the crafts will be sent to various units, which will enhance the AFP's capabilities to address transnational crimes and counter maritime threats by conducting maritime interdiction operations.

# MBLT-5, JSOTF-P partner for medical, veterinarian missions in Sulu

By Lt.j.g. Theresa Donnelly  
*JSOTF-P Public Affairs*

More than 1,500 people gathered in Barangay Taglibi and surrounding areas to attend an education symposium and receive care at a Medical and Veterinarian Civic Action Program at Datu Uddin Bahjin Central Elementary School in the Patikul municipality Jan. 8.

Organized by the Armed Forces of the Philippines Marine Battalion Landing Team-5 in collaboration with Joint Special Operations Task Force-Philippines, patients received medical and dental care and prescriptions. Additionally, farmers brought their animals for parasite control medication and vitamin treatments.

“It’s a great day and I’m very thankful to be here with our partners in peace. As I look out into the crowd, I see the future professionals and those who will one day be making a difference in Jolo,” said the JSOTF-P’s Army Special Forces team leader.

At the symposium titled “Importance of Education Awareness,” prominent leaders in the community including barangay representatives, MBLT-5 officers, teachers and School Principal Hja Sitti Lina Asjal all spoke about the role everyone plays in educating children in Sulu.

“What matters most is not what we become, but what others become because of us. These children here are the future, and the future of our education in Sulu. We thank all of you for coming and helping to develop this relationship with our school officials and the military,” said Asjal.

After the opening ceremonies, patients and farmers lined up to receive care. JSOTF-P’s Military Information Support Team was also on-hand, handing out coloring and comic books, as well as playing with the children.

The following day, a VETCAP was put together by MBLT-5 and JSOTF-P at the AFP Marine camp headquarters. Many of the camp’s dogs and other pets were given anti-rabies vaccines and treated for parasites. The

camp’s landowner, Hadja Hadja Samsarani, brought her cow to receive deworming and vitamin treatments.

Goldsmith emphasized that the treatments given during VETCAPs are proven safe and effectively kill parasites, resulting in weight gain and improved health. Often, the animals on Sulu are in poor health and very emaciated due to malnutrition and severe parasite infection. Some have diarrhea, skin infections and are weak and stunted.

“In many of the barangays on Sulu, after the VETCAPs many farmers report dramatic health improvement with weight gain, removal of parasites, increased activity and improved skin and body condition,” said Goldsmith.

In the coming weeks, Goldsmith will go back to Patikul and give a seminar to all the barangay chairmen in the area, to spread awareness on the diseases common on Sulu and the effectiveness and safety of medications. These same medications are used in other agricultural regions in the Philippines by farmers and the Philippine Department of Agriculture.



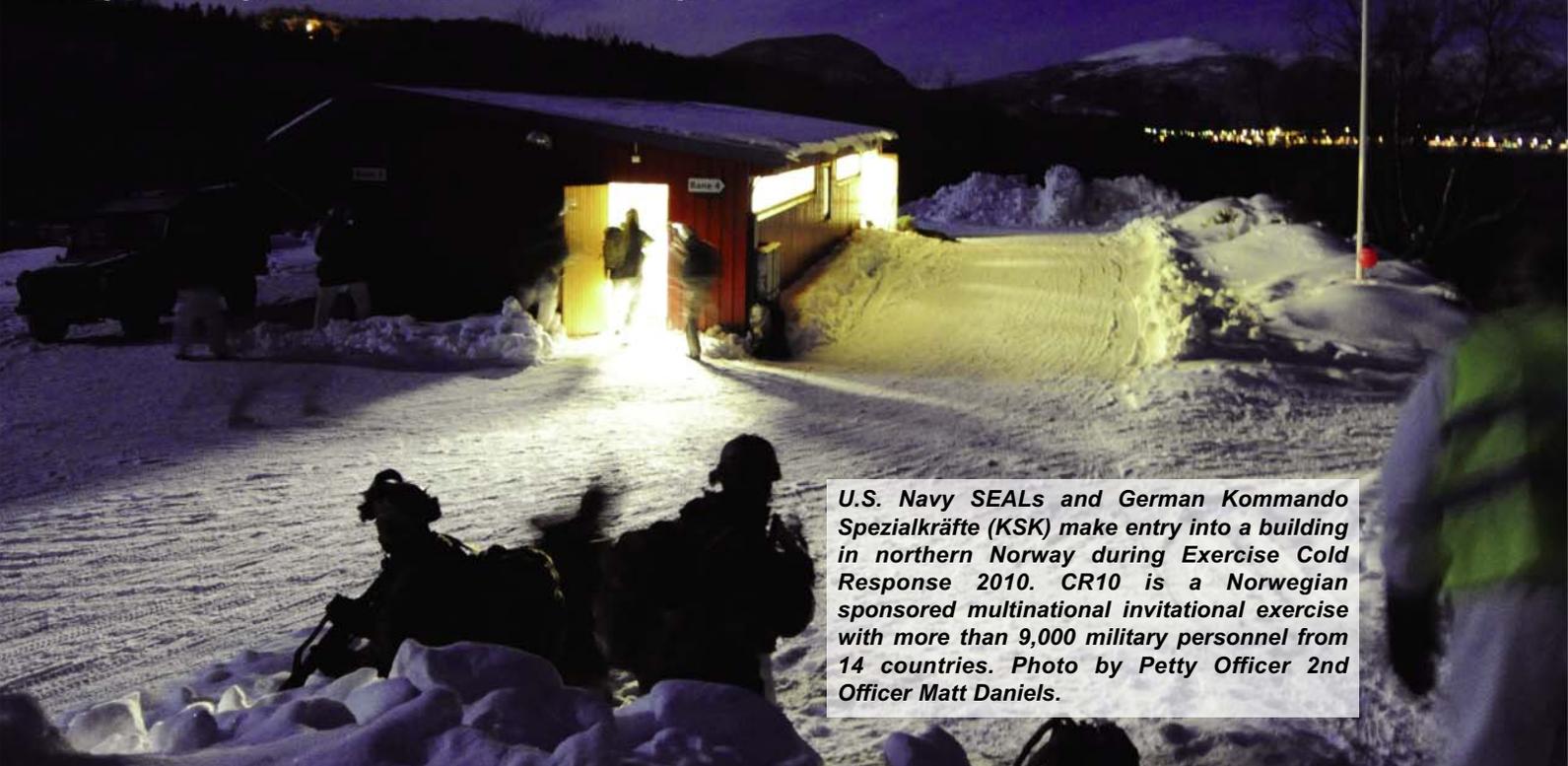
**Joint Special Operations Task Force-Philippines Veterinarian Lt. Col. Stephen Goldsmith gives a deworming medication to a cow at a Veterinarian Civic Action Program at the Armed Forces of the Philippines Marine Battalion Landing Team-5 headquarters. JSOTF-P and MBLT-5 partnered for the event, treating dozens of livestock and camp animals. Photo by Lt.j.g. Theresa Donnelly.**



**SOF AROUND THE WORLD - NORWAY**  
**SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND - EUROPE**

# SOF adapt to harsh, wintry conditions during exercise Cold Response

By Master Sgt. Donald Sparks  
Special Operations Command Europe



*U.S. Navy SEALs and German Kommando Spezialkräfte (KSK) make entry into a building in northern Norway during Exercise Cold Response 2010. CR10 is a Norwegian sponsored multinational invitational exercise with more than 9,000 military personnel from 14 countries. Photo by Petty Officer 2nd Officer Matt Daniels.*

More than 100 U.S. active duty and reserve military Special Operations Forces personnel from around the world convened in northern Norway from Feb. 17 to Mar. 4 to participate in exercise Cold Response 2010.

Cold Response is a NATO exercise sponsored by Norway to allow military personnel to train in extreme, harsh winter conditions. With more than 8,500 military personnel, approximately 1,000 Special Operations members, and 14 nations represented, it is the largest military exercise in Norway.

Elements from U.S. Special Operations Command Europe, and U.S. Navy forces from Naval Special

Warfare Unit Two (NSWU-2), SEAL Team 18, and Special Boat Team 20, took part in the exercise.

“Our role was primarily one of coaching and mentoring an already excellent Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force staff on staff functions and roles during joint combined operations,” said Sgt. Maj. Gregory Hayes, SOCEUR Operations sergeant major. “The exercise allowed a unique opportunity to train with the best cold weather Soldiers in the world and learn the best tactics, techniques and procedures to not just survive, but to succeed in combat under the harshest conditions.”

Although SOF personnel have been fully engaged in desert and hot-weather climates, Hayes mentioned the importance of experiencing training in extreme cold weather conditions as well. Temperatures throughout the three-week exercise range between 5 and -35 degrees Celsius and often included blustery wind chill conditions.

For the NSWU-2 Detachment and Navy Operational Support Center reserve component sailors participating in the exercise, learning how to adapt to the elements was critical not just for the fight, but for self preservation to include combating cold weather injuries.

When asked how Cold Response helped him, a Master at Arms from SEAL Team 18 said, “I learned that layering and hydration are critical, that four meals a day increases your metabolism and warms a cold body, and the cold is nothing to take for granted.”

“I also learned the role of SSE (sensitive site exploitation) and how it needs to work hand in hand with the SEAL teams and other Special Operations Forces to accomplish one team goal,” he said.

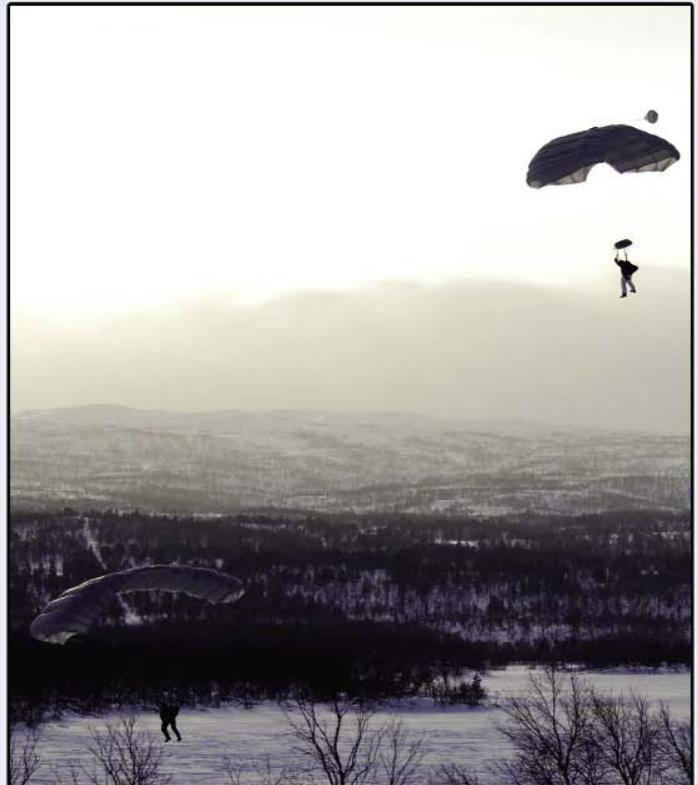
Collaborating with the German Kommando Spezialkräfte (known as the ‘KSK’) and the Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol (LRRPs, pronounced ‘lurps’), SEAL Team 18, completed both reconnaissance and direct action missions.

At the conclusion of the exercise, Hayes welcomed the opportunity to train in an environment considered as one of the harshest – whether being able to navigate on terrain on skis, submerge in freezing water or maintaining the ability and to fire a frozen weapon.

“Certainly special operations is designed to operate in all environments and therefore must train on core cold weather tasks to remain proficient,” Hayes said. “The environment in Norway, particularly around the Arctic Circle is very unique. The cold is unlike most places in the world and requires an in-depth look at equipment and procedures to be effective.

“Because of this, we sometimes relearn lessons we forgot and also learn new procedures and evaluate our preparation and equipment in the harsh conditions of the far north. That’s what so great about Cold Response, it provided unparalleled training opportunities.”

*Editor’s note – Petty Officer 2nd Class Ashley Myers, SEAL Team 18 contributed to this article.*



**(Top) U.S. Navy SEALs and German Kommando Spezialkräfte (KSK) freefall parachute onto a frozen lake in northern Norway during Exercise Cold Response 2010. Photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Matt Daniels. (Bottom) Naval Special Warfare Special Boat team 20 transports German troops during an exfiltration after a direct action mission with SEAL team 18 during Cold Response 2010. Cold Response is a Norwegian invitational event open to all NATO nations for winter warfare and joint coalition training. Photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Ashley Myers.**



U.S. ARMY SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND



# Green Berets sharpen Mountain Warfare skills

*Story and photos by Staff Sgt. Michael Noggle  
10th Special Forces Group (Airborne)*

Day one was complete - almost.

A Green Beret skins up a short, but steep hill with a rucksack weighing more than 40 pounds, and an M4 rifle slung across his front. The snow had been falling off and on all day, and the Soldier with his team was headed back to base camp after a long day of range operations.

“Have to keep moving...,” he said in low but assuring voice. “We have a few miles until we reach camp.”

One week removed from their initial downhill, off-

piste (snow not tracked upon) refresher training, Special Forces Soldiers from A Company, 3rd Battalion, 10th Special Forces Group (Airborne), were enhancing their mountain warfare abilities near Taylor Park Reservoir, Colo. Jan. 21-25.

The unit conducted a five-day field exercise, which included range operations, building field expedient shelters and medical litters; concluding with a team culmination exercise with movement through back-country terrain.

“This training allows everybody to experience snowy or arctic conditions in which to conduct combat



*Soldiers from A Company, 3rd Battalion, 10th Special Forces Group (Airborne), shoot at a range during weather exposure training in Taylor Park, Colo., Jan. 22. The Green Berets from Fort Carson spent a day at the range learning to shoot from skis and snow shoes.*

operations,” said Master Sgt. Jim Rainville, A-3/10 team sergeant. “10th Group’s areas of operation can include the Alps, caucuses, mountains, or Nordic areas.”

For the majority of the company’s Soldiers, this was the first time they have conducted weather exposure training, aside from the alpine downhill and skinning conducted at Crested Butte, Colo., a week prior.

“The training has been a great experience and worth doing again,” said a Special Forces weapons sergeant. “It definitely got my feet wet, knowing what’s needed, what kind of equipment you need, how to use it. This will be something I would want to continue training on.”

The first day of training allowed the Green Berets to become familiar with cross-country skinning, skijoring with a snowmobile and learning to shoot on skis and snowshoes. During such times, each individual was carrying 40 to 60 pounds of equipment.

“It’s a lot more difficult. Anything you do in a snow environment is at quarter speed,” Rainville said. “You’re delayed with the cold, trudging through the snow, wearing heavier jackets and restricted movement. It’s a big challenge just showing guys how difficult it is and being able to practice firing off skis. A magazine change is quite a task in itself.”

The following days consisted of the unit learning to survive in a cold weather environment with subzero temperatures; educating themselves on how to build proper shelters as well as moving throughout various terrains during the day and night while pulling their equipment; a full combat load.

“We were taught the proper ways to build shelters and how to stay warm,” said the weapons sergeant. “It wasn’t too bad staying out at night. If you make a good shelter, you’re going to stay warm at night.”

Rainville, one of only two individuals in the company with mountain warfare experience, explained the importance for the unit to continue these training opportunities.



***Soldiers from A Company, 3rd Battalion, 10th Special Forces Group (Airborne), return to base via tactically ski skinning at Taylor Park, Colo. Jan. 22. The Green Berets from Fort Carson conducted five days of weather exposure training.***

“When I was in Kosovo, my team and I did two combat ski patrols,” he said. “If I hadn’t had this type of training, I would have been worthless.”

Most, if not all, of the participants believed the training to be beneficial and would continue to train on their skills.

“It definitely will make everyone here a better operator having learned this,” the weapons sergeant explained. “Everyone knows there limit on what they can handle now.”

Though the number of experienced mountain warfare Green Berets have dwindled in the last decade, Rainville feels those numbers will increase with additional training.

“When I first got to 10th Group, there was a core of guys who did winter warfare training for fifteen to twenty years, it was a real good level of experience,” he said. “With most of those guys retired and the war on terror, we’ve lost a lot of experienced guys (in this area) and there are very few left (to pass on their knowledge).”

Rainville finished by adding, “I’m glad to see we’re starting to get back into doing this again. This is something that sets us apart from the other Special Forces units and we have to maintain it.”



U.S. ARMY SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND

# Portable ultrasound empowers Special Forces

*Story and photos by Staff Sgt. Jeremy Crisp  
3rd Special Forces Group (Airborne) Public Affairs*

When Dr. (Maj.) Andrew Morgan came to 3rd Special Forces Group (Airborne), he already knew the value of ultrasound machines from being an emergency physician at Womack Army Medical Center at Fort Bragg, N.C.

He brought that knowledge with him to the group in the summer of 2007 when he became the battalion surgeon for 1st Battalion, 3rd SFG, and he quickly pushed to have more ultrasound machines at his unit.

He and his staff realized a deficiency in the arena of medical imaging after they reviewed the medical capabilities of the battalion's Special Forces Operational Detachment Alpha teams. So, he pushed to acquire more ultrasound machines for the Special Forces medics in the field, where they would have the greatest impact.

The machines, which use high-frequency sound waves to look into the body for a variety of medical purposes, such as identifying blood in the abdomen, finding fractures, skin infections and collapsed lungs, already have widespread use in Army medicine, but until recently were not storied in the Special Forces arena.

But with the advent of portable ultrasound machines, which can weigh less than five pounds, Special Forces medics are realizing the power of this technology in their environment.

Currently, each Special Forces battalion is authorized a single portable ultrasound machine, but when Morgan took his current position he requested more of the machines to put in the hands of the unit's medics.

He argued there was a "lack of practical imaging" on the battlefield, and in his eyes, one portable ultrasound wasn't sufficient for training or operational employment.

So Morgan proposed an idea to the command surgeon at the United States Army Special Forces Command, then Col. Peter Benson, that if his battalion was authorized more portable ultrasound machines, they would be put to good use. He would give a detailed report to USASFC on how the



*Dr. (Maj.) Andrew Morgan (right), battalion surgeon, 1st Battalion, 3rd Special Forces Group (Airborne), explains some of the functions of a portable ultrasound machine to Sgt. 1st Class Kevin Burkett, medic, 1st Battalion, while Sgt. 1st Class Steven Radloff, medic, 1st Battalion, looks on during the Special Operations Medical Association's annual conference in Tampa, Fla. Morgan and his office have been pushing to get more portable ultrasound machines, as well as practical training, in the hands of Special Forces medics to help empower them on the battlefield.*

machines were used by medics in the field.

His proof would come in the form of numbers.

Morgan, Sgt. 1st Class David Hubler, senior medic, 1st Battalion, and Capt. William Vasios, physician assistant for 1st Battalion, spent more than a year training 26 Special Forces medics to use the machines. In January 2009, the battalion deployed to Afghanistan with nine portable ultrasound machines to put to the test in a combat zone.

"The concept of putting portable ultrasound machines in the hands of our 18Ds (Special Forces medics) is something I'm very excited about," Morgan said. "Ultrasound has been around for years, but the novelty in our concept is

empowering medics, in addition to medical officers.”

Battalion medics collected hundreds of images from exams from their deployment to use for documentation and to characterize how Special Forces medics employed their new skill.

Along with their newly acquired capability to use ultrasound in the field, the battalion also had X-ray at their disposal; however, Morgan said the contrast between the two systems couldn't be greater when it comes to portability and practicality.

Each Special Forces battalion has one portable X-ray system, but the size of the machine made it impractical to use in remote combat environments.

“It would take one-third of a Chinook helicopter to get an X-ray machine out to a firebase,” Hubler said.

This is in stark contrast with the currently fielded portable ultrasound machine's ability to fit inside a standard-size medical aid bag.

Therefore, the medics of 1st Battalion took full advantage of portable ultrasound on the battlefield.

“We were interested to find that they (Special Forces medics) found it practical not only for trauma, but also routine medical care of their teammates and host nationals,” Morgan said.

One ODA medic returning from this recent deployment said he was initially apprehensive to use portable ultrasound.

Sgt. 1st Class Robert Lopez envisioned a lengthy learning curve and thought portable ultrasound's use was more for pregnancy than for battlefield injuries. However, learning to use the machine took less time than he thought, and his feelings of apprehension quickly subsided after he used it for the first time.

As a Special Forces medic with 1st Battalion, Lopez was a beneficiary of the training organized by Morgan and his staff, and on their recent deployment, he ran a remote firebase clinic where his machine saw prolific use.

He described several stories of his practical use of portable ultrasound to a large crowd of physicians and medics during the Special Operations Medical Association's annual conference in Tampa, Fla.

But it was the story of the first time he put his training to the test downrange that had the audience captivated.

Early in 2009, Lopez thought he was going to have an easy day at his remote clinic when a local national came in with a pain in his hand.

Lopez said he didn't notice anything out of the ordinary with the patient's hand, so he gave the man some pain medicine and told him to come back later if it still hurt.

Four hours later the local national was back.

“It was then that I looked behind me and saw the ultrasound machine,” Lopez said.

He decided to put his training to work.

Lopez conducted an evaluation of the patient's hand using the portable ultrasound machine and found a foreign body: a piece of shrapnel from a blast at a trash pit some time back.

Lopez was able to consult with one of his doctors several hours away by describing what he saw on the ultrasound. The doctor confirmed the patient did indeed have a foreign body in his hand.

In a matter of five to 10 minutes, Lopez was able to remove the shrapnel.

“My ability to find the foreign body and remove it gave the patient a lot of confidence in my abilities,” Lopez said. “And it gave me a lot of confidence in using the ultrasound machine.”

Up to a 100 patients a day came through Lopez's clinic, and by the end of the rotation, he said, “if patients came in continued on next page



**Sgt. 1st Class David Hubler, senior medic, 1st Battalion, 3rd Special Group (Airborne), practices placing a syringe in a vein on a training device while using a portable ultrasound machine for guidance during the Special Operations Medical Association's annual conference Dec. 15, in Tampa, Fla. Ultrasound can see patient's veins as well as a syringe entering an area, which helps ensure the needle is put in the right place.**



## U.S. ARMY SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND



and I didn't use the ultrasound, they thought I didn't care about them."

But it took some time for an ultrasound machine to find its way to Lopez's hands.

Portable ultrasound in Special Forces actually had its beginnings in 2003 when the group received their initial fielding.

Upgraded machines were added 18 months ago, and only recently did demand mount for more widespread fielding, said Lt. Col. Andrew Landers, current command surgeon at USASFC.

"I have always been a big proponent of ultrasound, but we needed some data to support the use, and to look at training issues," Landers said.

Morgan provided that data, as well as a model training program.

He and several other medical practitioners devised a program they dubbed Special Operator-Level Clinical Ultrasound, or SOLCUS, which they loosely based off guidelines given for training emergency physicians by the American College of Emergency Physicians.

Morgan said he intends for the training program to spread and bring ultrasound capability to all types of Special Operations units.

Those intentions moved forward Dec. 13 when he briefed his two-year experience with training and applying ultrasound in the Special Forces environment at the SOMA conference.

He, along with Lopez and Hubler, also briefed their personal accounts of success with ultrasound and demonstrated the value of the equipment to physicians and medics from across the world.

In attendance were Special Operations medical professionals from allied nations, civilian government agencies such as NASA, physicians and physician assistants from various specialties, and Special Operations medics from every branch of the U.S. Armed Forces.

They were immersed in eight hours of lessons learned and practical training on the portable machines.

The audience also heard some of the technical aspects of why Morgan had such a passion about ultrasound.

Portable ultrasound machines offer capabilities such as saving images as .jpg files, as well as recording live video of procedures in which they are used. These can then be downloaded through USB ports on the machines.

The machines can see nerve bundles to help in local



**Capt. William Vasios (left), physician assistant, 1st Battalion, 3rd Special Forces Group (Airborne), explains to an audience what is seen on the screen of a portable ultrasound machine while Sgt. 1st Class Robert Lopez, Special Forces medic, 1st Battalion, 3rd Special Forces Group, conducts a training exam using the machine during the Special Operations Medical Association's annual conference Dec. 15, Tampa, Fla. Lopez used the machine exclusively during his latest deployment and he and Vasios have been big proponents of helping get the machines in the hands of more Special Forces medics.**

anesthesia and can show clear pictures of veins to guide medics when drawing blood or giving fluids intravenously.

They operate off an Operators' standard radio battery or can be plugged into a 110-volt power source with a continuous run-time of two hours.

They are roughly \$40,000, a third of the cost of a portable X-ray machine and have a much greater diversity of functions than X-ray. This makes portable ultrasound a more viable financial option and a more powerful clinical tool for the groups, Morgan said.

"Using portable ultrasound in theater is kind of like the guy who first decided to put a lid on a coffee cup; it just made sense," Vasios said. "So we used it, and we proved it."

With these factors in mind, the medical staff of 1st Battalion and Landers continue to work to get more portable ultrasound machines in the hands of those they feel need them most: the Special Forces medic.

"The plan is to increase the program to all the groups in a phased approach," Landers said. "The key is training and maintaining the skills required to operate and use the machines."

# Ranger USASOC Medic of the Year

By Tracy A. Bailey  
75th Ranger Regiment Public Affairs

Braving a hail of automatic gunfire during an intense fire fight, Sgt. Bryan Rippee, less than ten feet away from the tip of the enemy's weapon, assessed the situation, took charge, and rapidly began treatment of the wounded.

The intense close-quarters gunfire exchange between militants and Rangers while clearing the compound had left one Ranger wounded and unresponsive in the center of the room. With gun fire and grenades continuing to cross the room, Ranger medic Rippee exposed himself to enemy fire in order to suppress the enemy. Gaining fire superiority he noticed another Ranger also wounded. "Someone once said the best medicine on the battlefield is fire superiority," said Rippee. "As a medic, I am in a position to benefit the force and strive to be able to help in combat both as a medic and a Soldier."

Rippee began treating the chest wounds while a Ranger assault element moved forward to neutralize the enemy threat with small arms and hand grenades. Rippee used his body to shield the casualty from the explosions and continued treatment. As an emergency medical technician moved into the room Rippee directed him to assess and treat the severely damaged left arm of a second casualty. Rippee continued to direct care and treatment until additional medical personnel arrived.

Capt. Andrew Fisher, 1st Ranger Battalion Physician Assistant, who knows Rippee well, had this to say of him: "Recognizing the severity of the wounds, Sergeant Rippee rapidly began his initial assessment and treatment. At the risk of being engaged by the enemy, Sergeant Rippee took the necessary steps to secure and treat the casualty. I have deployed with Sergeant Rippee on all of his deployments and have witnessed many of his heroic and valorous actions..." For that day in Iraq, Rippee was awarded the Army Commendation Medal with "V" device.



Sgt. Bryan Rippee

Throughout his time in the 75th Ranger Regiment, Rippee has proven over and over his mettle as a combat medic both on and off the battlefield.

In the fall of 2009, serving with 1st Ranger Battalion in Afghanistan, while conducting a night time operation, a team of Rangers were critically wounded when they encountered an improvised explosive device. Rippee, who witnessed the event from about 40 meters away, ran into the unsecure blast area without regard for his own safety, and began treating and conducting triage.

"My first reaction was to run like hell towards the explosion and the Rangers; I knew there would be a lot of casualties," said Rippee. "I bolted down the road through the smoke and dust and came upon a wounded Ranger and began assessing and treating him. We are trained to treat wounded Rangers by the severity of the wounds, not how bad the wounds look," said Rippee.

After the Casualty Collection Point was established, Rippee assisted in the movement of the wounded and continued treating the Rangers until medical evacuation arrived.

In that encounter Rippee was credited with saving the lives of two of the six wounded.

Rippee's finest hour may have come during that same rotation when a mid-air collision of two helicopters in route to a target compound instantly turned the assault mission into a combat search and rescue as the remainder of the force quickly landed at the crash. Rapidly exiting the helicopter he was on, Rippee immediately ran to the burning wreckage. With ammunition and exploding, and the screams of the injured trapped in the flaming aircraft piercing the night, Rippee and a Ranger squad leader pulled one of the survivors from the burning airframe, carrying him 40 meters then conducting the medical efforts that would save that soldier's life.

For Rippee, who doesn't consider himself a hero, courage seems to be an ingrained trait, apparent to his fellow Rangers and supervisors. "Sergeant Rippee is a devoted and extraordinary medic. His performance both in training and in combat are the epitome what a United States Army Special Operations Non-commissioned Officer should be, know and do," said Fisher. "He is an immeasurable asset to our organization. His sense of ethics and discipline is beyond reproach."



## NAVAL SPECIAL WARFARE COMMAND

# Special Warfare personnel to benefit from new war fighter performance lab

*Story and photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class John Scorza  
Naval Special Warfare Public Affairs*

Naval Health Research Center's Warfighter Performance Lab recently began testing a \$1.1 million Virtual Environment system used to study and improve the war fighter, including SEALs from Naval Special Warfare.

The research facility's virtual environment is one of 15 in the world and one of only three in the United States.

The virtual environment is a biomechanics and exercise physiology lab on a motion platform that can pitch, yaw and roll by 25 degrees. On the platform is an integrated split-belt (side-by-side) treadmill and instrumented force plates to measure the pressures

applied during walking, running or marching. In front of the motion platform is a nine-foot-tall screen that curves 180 degrees around the platform to view programmed simulations. The environment is also equipped with a full-motion capture sensor to record the subject's movements. These movements are picked up from reflective markers similar to the ones used in making video games.

"By placing little reflective markers all over their body, you can record exact movements in real time," said Senior Chief Petty Officer Eric Duckworth, lab manager. "The markers control the interaction between the subject and the computer program."

The system can also be integrated with other equipment such as reduced-oxygen breathing devices to simulate different altitudes.

A man in a striped shirt is seen from the side, looking at a large curved screen displaying a virtual city street. He is in a dark room with several computer monitors. One monitor shows a data interface with various colored dots and text. Another monitor shows a 3D perspective view of a city street with buildings and a yellow car. A treadmill is visible in the foreground, and a sign hangs from the ceiling. The scene is dimly lit, with light from the screens illuminating the man and the equipment.

*Senior Chief Petty Officer Eric Duckworth tests a computer program on the new Virtual Environment system at Naval Health Research Center in San Diego, Calif. The Virtual Environment system is one of 15 in the world and one of three in the U.S. and will be used to help study and rehabilitate warfighters.*

“The screen is used so we can create an immersive environment for people to move in,” said Lt. Jamie Bartlett, operations officer. “Right now we have eight programs, including a virtual Afghanistan, where we can perform studies as if the warfighter was out in the field. The platform moves in sync with the terrain, so when they see an incline they feel an inclination of the platform while moving on the treadmill belt. It feels realistic.”

“We intend to use virtual environments as a research platform to immerse subjects in realistic military environments and see how they perform,” said Bartlett.

“For example, load carriage is a big issue now. We can test a subject in full battle rattle, with a 150-pound pack on his back and walk at patrol pace in Afghanistan

terrain. While moving in this environment, not only can we examine the effects of load and fatigue on the body, we can also see how they do performing cognitive tasks such as land navigation, working memory, identifying targets, or using a first-person shooter type of simulation.”

Experts agree that although all warfighters will benefit from VE research, personnel within the Special Operations Forces may see the greatest impact from the research.

“The VE will be critical for studying groups who continually operate in diverse and extreme environments such as SWCC and SEAL units,” said Bartlett. “The changing demands of their duties make them one of the military’s most complex weapon systems and now we have the ability to keep up.”



## NAVAL SPECIAL WARFARE COMMAND

# Joint exercise provides partner nations with maritime, ground-based skills

*A student from the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation (WHINSEC) moves to secure a target during a joint field training exercise with students from the Naval Small Craft Instruction and Technical Training School (NAVSCIATTS). The mission of NAVSCIATTS is to provide partner nation security forces with the highest level of riverine and littoral craft operations and maintenance technical training, while WHINSEC focuses on providing professional education and training to eligible persons of the nations of the Western Hemisphere.*

*Story and photos by Petty Officer 2nd Class Tim Miller  
Naval Special Warfare Group 4 Public Affairs*

Naval Small Craft Instruction and Technical Training School (NAVSCIATTS) and the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation (WHINSEC) conducted a joint field training exercise March 1 through 5 at John C. Stennis Space Center, Miss.

This training was the third time NAVSCIATTS and

WHINSEC have worked together in a combined effort, bringing together military and law enforcement representatives from 19 nations from North, Central and South America, the Caribbean, Europe and Africa with a common objective of enhancing skills and proficiency to assure operational success.

“It was great to work with students from other countries,” said Sub-Lt. Patrick Ali, a NAVSCIATTS patrol craft officer course student from the Nigerian Navy. “The language barrier was difficult at first but we

were able to overcome that and work as a team to carry out our training and then ultimately our mission on the last day.”

NAVSCIATTS and WHINSEC schoolhouses train international students in maritime and ground-based operations respectively. Both have particular strengths in cultural sensitivity and bilingual instructor cadre language capabilities enabling students to focus more on training and less on language barriers.

The combined training with WHINSEC provides NAVSCIATTS students the experience of working, coordinating with and inserting troops into an operation from their patrol crafts. After working together twice previously in this manner, the two schools signed a memorandum of understanding.

“The memorandum of understanding we have with NAVSCIATTS benefits us both, particularly in adding realism to the training. NAVSCIATTS students get to focus on the specific riverine training they will be going back to their nations to do, and WHINSEC students get a lesson in teamwork and joint operations, leaving the water crossing to experts. WHINSEC students can keep the final objective the target of all their efforts,” said Army Col. Felix Santiago, commandant, WHINSEC. “This joint initiative between WHINSEC and NAVSCIATTS is precisely the type of creative and ground-breaking approach toward the training of agile, adaptable and flexible multinational and interagency formations, we should be pursuing in order to stay ahead of our adversaries or to confront contemporary and complex threats.”

The current 9-week counterdrug operations course at WHINSEC brings together a number of nations who face common threats. Working with the instructors and students from the patrol craft officer course at NAVSCIATTS, they are able to develop a proficiency that is needed to succeed when confronting these threats.

“The relationship between us and WHINSEC began because we were willing to sit down and talk with the idea of how do we make this work rather than leaning toward no. Just as we feel the relationships we build with our students are equally as important as the technical training we provide, the relationship we enjoy with WHINSEC is the critical factor in our continued

joint exercises. They wear a different uniform but our missions are similar. Working together makes sense and more importantly it is the right thing to do for our country and our partner nations,” said Navy Cmdr. Mike Scott, acting commanding officer, NAVSCIATTS. “The way ahead for the WHINSEC and NAVSCIATTS relationship is to incorporate more into our field exercise. Imagine the NAVSCIATTS boats inserting and extracting the WHINSEC students with helos providing additional support. We want to make our exercises realistic, so we are always looking for methods to bring the game to the next higher level.”

The hope for both schoolhouses is that their students will take the information they’ve learned during this exercise back to their respective countries and implement them in their training with their subordinates as well as their peers.

“In the Belize Coast Guard we believe that knowledge possessed only by one person is not effective,” said Lt. j.g. Javier Bosch with the Belize Coast Guard Service. “As soon as I return back to Belize, I will give back to my country everything that I learned here.”



**Army Staff Sgt. Alexis Aponte, from the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation (WHINSEC), observes students while they detain two high value targets during a joint field training exercise with students from the Naval Small Craft Instruction and Technical Training School (NAVSCIATTS).**



# Special Tactics warrior earns rare Legion of Merit award

By Chief Master Sgt. Ty Foster  
AFSOC Public Affairs

Lt. Gen. Donald Wurster, commander of Air Force Special Operations Command, presented the Legion of Merit medal to a retiring combat control veteran during a brief ceremony at Hurlburt Field, Fla., Jan. 5.

The medal Wurster presented to Chief Master Sgt. Mike Ramos, the AFSOC combat control functional manager, served as a capstone to the chief's career of more than 30 years.

"The Legion of Merit is the award you give to a successful wing commander," the general said. "It is presented to command chiefs extremely rarely." Processing the LOM required requesting an exception to policy, endorsed by the AFSOC commander and approved by the Air Force Decorations Board.

"It is exceptional, but so was Chief Ramos' service," said Chief Master Sgt. Mike Gilbert, AFSOC command chief.

A few months ago, Ramos' successor, Chief Master Sgt. Tim Hoyer, discussed the options of an appropriate decoration for the soon-to-be retired chief.

His directorate leaders all agreed that adding another Meritorious Service Medal to Chief Ramos' revered ribbon rack just wasn't going to do the venerable warrior justice, Hoyer said.

"The general criterion is, in addition to exceptional leadership, the nominee must have a broad impact on the force," Gilbert said. "In Mike's case, as one of the very top chiefs in special tactics, that case was easily made.

"Across special tactics, the Air Force and U.S. Special Operations Command, his expertise and leadership are a given - he was also a visionary," the command chief said. "He was one of the main forces behind expanding our Joint Terminal Attack Controller force by selecting and training experienced Tactical Air Control Party Airmen to fill special operations JTAC requirements. This has allowed AFSOC to increase our support to our brothers on the ground."

"As I've served in this command, I've met so many chiefs who do such phenomenal things, it is always difficult

to decide who among them deserve that extra level of recognition for their service," Gilbert said. "Mike's leadership and impact across the force in a community so critical to our success on the battlefield made a clear case for fighting for the higher award."



Chief Master Sgt. Mike Ramos

Ramos' impact on the SOF mission goes well beyond the AFSOC combat control and special tactics mission.

"He devoted himself to meeting, mentoring and influencing every Airman who came into AFSOC by conducting and participating in weekly physical fitness training sessions while these Airmen attended the Commando Pride Airman Center," Hoyer said. "He took time each week to let them know that AFSOC was different and that they needed to commit themselves to an AFSOC way of life that required more of them than just being in the 'Big Blue' Air Force."

Throughout his career, Ramos, a highly decorated veteran of multiple deployments, filled every role or position within special tactics and forged, then filled, the first AFSOC combat control FAM position, Hoyer said. "He was my mentor ... he was consistent, fair, assertive, responsible and held people accountable ... in my eyes, the epitome of what a chief should be."

For Ramos, it essentially boiled down to honoring where he came from.

"I remember, as a young Airman in the field, thinking 'I hope someone at the top knows what it's like to be the only Air Force guy attached to an Army, Navy, Marine, or Coalition team,'" Ramos said. "And they were always there for me. As I increased in rank, I tried to think about the troops on the ground and do whatever I could to support them."

"My drive has always been the mission and therefore the Airmen, because they accomplish the mission," Ramos said. "For a chief, they are the mission."

# Combat Controllers awarded Bronze Stars, AF Combat Action Medals

By Buffy Galbraith  
AFSOC Public Affairs

Nine 23rd Special Tactics Squadron combat controllers were awarded 12 medals during a ceremony at Fresques Auditorium, Hurlburt Field, Fla., inside the Special Tactics Training Squadron Feb. 5.

A standing-room-only crowd witnessed the presentation of 10 Bronze Star medals, one with Valor, and three Air Force Combat Action medals by the commander of Air Force Special Operations Command, Lt. Gen. Donald Wurster.

“Today is a day to recognize the heroes among us, and I am here to tell you that you are making a difference,” said Wurster. “I am proud of each of you and respect what you do for our country.”

Tech. Sgt. Christopher Grove was presented two Bronze Stars, one with Valor. The Bronze Star is awarded to a person who distinguishes himself by heroic or meritorious service performed in ground combat.

According to the citation, Grove directed overhead aircraft to engage the enemy as close as 120 meters from his position, with six 500-pound bombs during a recent deployment to Afghanistan. With 15 insurgents closing in on his position, he called for strikes without regard for his own personal safety at “danger close” range, executing his duties with professionalism and calm.

Danger close range is when friendly forces are within 600 meters of the target while calling for fire.

Other Bronze Star recipients included Lt. Col. Brett Nelson, 23rd STS commander, Maj. Gregory Mallon, Capt. Julio Terrero, Chief Master Sgt. Antonio Travis, Senior Master Sgt. Carlos Neris,



Tech. Sgt. Christopher Grove

Master Sgt. Donald Stevens, Tech. Sgt. Joseph Hepler and Staff Sgt. Ryan Carter.

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*“Today is a day to recognize the heroes among us, and I am here to tell you that you are making a difference.”*

— Lt. Gen. Donald Wurster  
AFSOC Commander

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Air Force Combat Action Medals were presented to Terrero, Travis and Stevens.

The Air Force Combat Action Medal is awarded to an individual who actively participates in combat under direct and hostile fire while operating in unsecured space, or physically engaging hostile forces with lethal fire.

Col. Brad Thompson, 720th Special Tactics Group commander, spoke briefly about the men and their commitment to serve.

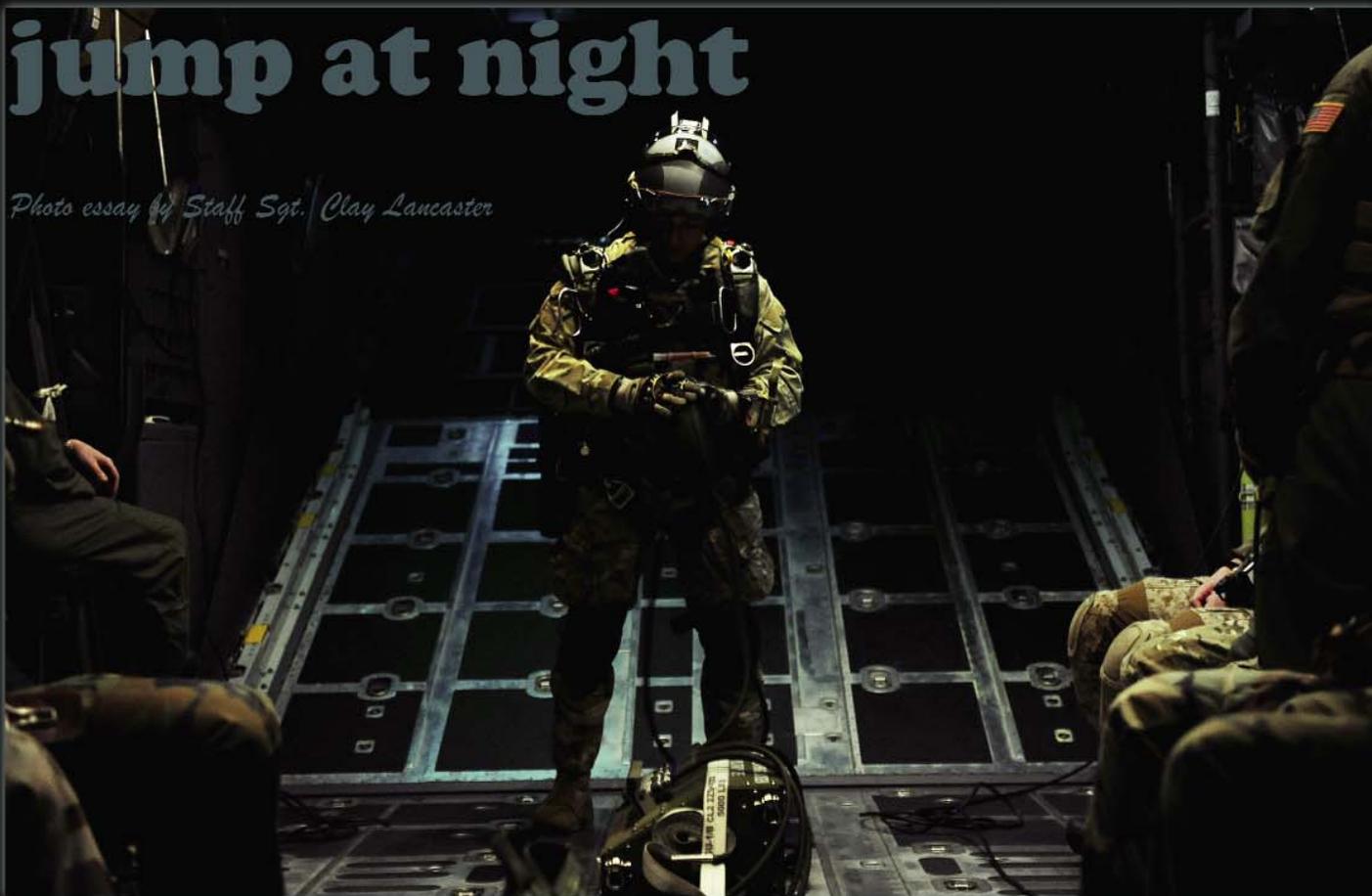
“You do it for your brothers and you do it for your nation,” he said. “We’re thankful and grateful to you.”

Combat Controllers are Special Operators and certified air traffic controllers who are an integral part of the Air Force Battlefield Airmen team. Their motto,

“First There,” indicates the CCT commitment to be the first deployed into restricted environments by air, land or sea to establish assault zones.

# Special Tactics Airmen jump at night

*Photo essay by Staff Sgt. Clay Lancaster*



**(Above) Airmen of the U.S. Air Force Special Tactics Training Squadron prepare to conduct a high altitude, low opening or HALO, mission near Fort Walton Beach, Fla., March 16, during Exercise Emerald Warrior 2010. Emerald Warrior is U.S. Special Operations Command-sponsored, 19-day joint training exercise at multiple sites along Florida's Gulf Coast. (Bottom photos) Special Tactics Airmen wait to jump on a high altitude, low opening mission.**





*(Above) Staff Sgt. Patrick Hann, MC-130 Combat Shadow loadmaster, conducts pre-jump procedures during a high altitude, low opening or HALO mission during Exercise Emerald Warrior 2010.*



*(Top right) A U.S. Air Force Special Tactics Training Squadron member prepares students before a HALO jump.*



*(Middle right) Special Tactics Airmen jump on a HALO mission.*



*(Bottom right) Airmen from the U.S. Air Force Special Tactics Training Squadron are on the ground after a HALO mission.*



# MARSOC Marine receives award for actions in Afghanistan

Story and photo by Cpl. Richard Blumenstein  
*MARSOC Public Affairs*

“We were moving into a location we were supposed to check out to see if any enemy strongholds were there. As soon as we came into the location, we started taking fire on our vehicles, RPGs (rocket-propelled grenades), rifle rounds, small-arms fire. They were beating on us,” said Gunnery Sgt. Michael Perella as he recalled the battle in October 2007, that led to him receiving the Bronze Star Medal with combat distinguishing device Nov. 25, 2009.

Perella was deployed to the Helmand province, Afghanistan, as an assault team leader and joint terminal attack controller with 2d Platoon, Company G, 2d Marine Special Operations Battalion, U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Special Operations Command, in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

The company had the mission of disrupting areas of interest as part of a larger mission to eventually take down a Taliban stronghold.

“We went out of the wire twenty-eight times and twenty-eight times we were in a gun fight,” Perella said.

The Marines moved to re-clear an area of interest Oct. 27, and, without warning, came under intense fire from rocket-propelled grenades and recoilless rifle rounds.

“After we pulled up to the edge of the town, we dismounted our vehicles and moved east toward the riverbed about one-hundred meters into the village,” said Gunnery Sgt. Alexander Neil, who served with Perella in the same platoon during the deployment and also received a Bronze Star Medal with combat distinguishing device from the deployment. “We started to receive small-arms fire from a small ridgeline, so we assaulted through, clearing a couple compounds, returning fire while on the move, until we got to a small hill.”

The Taliban fired on the Marines from a fortified position at the top of the hill and ridgeline. Perella and Neil each took a six-man team and maneuvered to defensive positions while fighting their way up the hill.

“When we got on the hill we could see recoilless rifle rounds hitting ten feet on the other side of the helm (village)



**Lt. Col. Peter Huntley, the commanding officer of 2d Marine Special Operations Battalion, U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Special Operations Command, presents Gunnery Sgt. Michael Perella with the Bronze Star Medal with combat distinguishing device Nov. 25, 2009, on Stone Bay, Camp Lejeune, N.C.**

from us,” Perella said. “They were planted all around us.”

The two teams covered each others’ flanks and cleared out the enemy positions until they finally reached the top of the ridgeline. Along the top of the ridgeline, the Marines found empty fighting positions where Taliban had previously dug in.

“Once we got to the top, the fire became heavier. We started to receive mortar fire, RPGs, and we were still receiving small-arms fire, but it was more pinpoint,” Neil said.

In fact, the fire had become so heavy the Marines received the order to pull back. Trucks moved into position to create suppressive fire with M2 .50-caliber machine guns and MK-19 grenade launchers. Once the teams had reached a safer location, a Special Operations team bombarded the enemy positions with mortars while Afghan National Police engaged them with rockets.

Perella took the opportunity to radio the enemy grid coordinates back to the rear and was soon greeted by friendly aircraft screaming overhead, raining down a barrage of bombs no less than 400 meters away.

The Marines in Perella and Neil’s team walked away unscathed that day, while the Taliban suffered heavy casualties.

# Clinic dedicated to fallen Corpsman

*Story and photo by Cpl. Richard Blumenstein  
MARSOC public Affairs*

The new U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Special Operations Command consolidated aid station was officially dedicated to Petty Officer 2nd Class Charles “Luke” Milam on March 12, at the MARSOC headquarters building.

Milam, a special amphibious reconnaissance corpsman, was killed in action in the Helmand province, Afghanistan, Sept. 25, 2007, during a deployment with 2d Marine Special Operations Battalion.

Milam completed a total of four combat tours during his career, three times to Iraq and one to Afghanistan. He was awarded the Bronze Star Medal with combat distinguishing device twice. He was also named MARSOC “Operator of the Year” in 2006, and was posthumously named MARSOC Medic of the Year in 2007.

During the ceremony, Maj. Gen. Paul Lefebvre, the commander of MARSOC, gave a speech honoring the highly decorated sailor.

“Today we are here to honor the sacrifice of one of our fallen warriors, Hospital Corpsman Second Class Charles Luke Milam, by dedicating the MARSOC consolidated aid station in his memory,” Lefebvre said. “This clinic will stand as a memorial of his selfless service, dedication to duty and ultimate sacrifice.”

The Charles Luke Milam Clinic, a state-of-the-art facility is the only one of its kind to be operated organically by Marine Corps, and will be staffed and equipped to deliver primary medical and dental care to the MARSOC active duty population. The facility, scheduled to open this

summer, will have capabilities such as sterilization services, digital radiology, an audiogram booth, and limited laboratory and pharmacy services.

Milam’s father, Michael Milam, also gave a speech talking about the pride his son took in passing on knowledge to Marines and sailors, and working as a SARC.

“With the many accolades that have come on in these last couple years, we mostly say Luke would hate this,” the proud father said commenting on Milam’s humbleness.

However, he said the new clinic is something “he would be thrilled to have his name on because of all the toys inside.”

The ceremony came to an end after Lefebvre, and Milam’s parents Rita and Michael Milam unveiled a plaque baring Milam’s likeness and story.

Following the ceremony, the Milams toured the new facility, and saw the display where the plaque will be hung in the front of the clinic.



*Maj. Gen. Paul Lefebvre, commander of U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Special Operations Command, and Rita and Michael Milam unveil a plaque dedicated to Petty Officer 2nd Class Charles “Luke” Milam on March 12, at the MARSOC headquarters building. The unveiling of the plaque was part of a larger dedication ceremony, celebrating the construction of the Charles Luke Milam Clinic. Milam, a special amphibious reconnaissance corpsman, was killed in action in the Helmand province, Afghanistan on Sept. 25, 2007, while serving with 2d Marine Special Operations Battalion.*



# The Kilpatrick-Dahlgren affair

## *A Civil War Prison Raid*

*By Christian Fearer*  
*USSOCOM History Office*

Eighty-one years before the rescue of prisoners at Cabanatuan prison in the Philippines and 106 years prior to the attempted rescue of prisoners at Son Tay in Vietnam, a handpicked Federal force under the command of a twenty-one year old one-legged colonel embarked on a mission to maneuver behind enemy lines and free thousands of Union soldiers held in the overcrowded, disease-stricken prisons of Richmond, Virginia. Although a failure, the raid sent shockwaves throughout the North and South.

By the beginning of 1864, reports of prison conditions in the Confederate capital led many Northerners to call for action to address the plight of their Union soldiers. Camps and warehouse prisons designed for the short-term detention of prisoners awaiting quick exchange had become plagued by overcrowding, filth, disease, and malnutrition when, a year and a half earlier, the exchange system collapsed. Belle Isle, an island prison in the James River intended for 3,000 enlisted prisoners held two to three times that number by the winter of 1864.

As winter gripped Virginia, the Federal Army of the Potomac and the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia sat opposite one another in winter quarters along the banks of the Rapidan River. Although the armies battled each other the previous year in major battles at Chancellorsville and Gettysburg, by the start of 1864, their lines moved little from where they were a year prior. Pressures continued to mount for the Lincoln Administration as the President faced reelection. The plight of Federal prisoners was recounted in the major Northern newspapers, which demanded some sort of action be taken.

In mid-February, Secretary of War Edwin Stanton called Brig. Gen. Judson Kilpatrick, commanding the Third Cavalry Division, to Washington to discuss a possible expedition to liberate the Federal prisoners held in Richmond. Kilpatrick, dubbed "Kill-Cavalry" for what some considered reckless tactics that unnecessarily jeopardized his men, met with Stanton and President Lincoln and agreed to such an operation. With Gen. Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia well forward and between the Federal army and Richmond, Kilpatrick was to slide behind the enemy, sever their lines of communication and supply,

and liberate the suspected ten thousand prisoners. Intelligence reports suggested that Richmond's defenses were manned by only three thousand men. Gen. George Meade, commanding the Army of the Potomac, was optimistic. "I trust they will be successful; it will be the greatest feat of the war if they do succeed and will immortalize them all."

Kilpatrick's operational concept involved three forces. A column commanded by George Armstrong Custer would move toward Charlottesville to threaten the enemy's lines of communication and supply in an effort to draw enemy forces away from the capital. Meanwhile, Kilpatrick, with the main body, was to descend on Richmond from the north. The smallest and most critical element was to be led by Ulric Dahlgren, a twenty-one-year-old colonel who just returned from medical leave following a severe wounding and amputation during the Gettysburg Campaign. Dahlgren's command – a handpicked force of 500 men – would operate separate from Kilpatrick, move west, cross the James upriver from Richmond, and then move southeast to liberate the prisoners on Belle Isle.

On the last day of February, Kilpatrick and Dahlgren ordered their commands forward with Dahlgren's force accompanied by six members of the intelligence-gathering Bureau of Military Information dressed in Confederate uniforms in the lead. They reached Spotsylvania Court House unmolested the following morning and, by chance, narrowly missed capturing a train carrying Lee. As they moved south, they cut telegraph lines, destroyed a train station and rails, and gathered enemy prisoners, who Dahlgren unwisely allowed to escape and alert Confederate authorities. By that afternoon, Lee informed Confederate officials in Richmond that Federal cavalry was seen moving in their direction as well as toward Charlottesville. Dahlgren and Kilpatrick had lost the element of surprise.

As Dahlgren's men crossed the South Anna River the following day, a torrential rain began to fall, making it increasingly difficult to keep the column closed. Despite the difficulties of moving through the elements, the troopers' morale remained high and mission focused. "The liberty of ten thousand of the best and bravest men was depending on our success," remembered one of Dahlgren's lieutenants.

Continuing through the rain, Dahlgren arrived at the James River Canal twenty-one miles northwest of Richmond

on the morning of March 1. There he ordered one hundred men under Captain John Mitchell to push toward the capital along the Kanawha Canal, which ran into city near the Tredegar Ironworks, the industrial center responsible for producing half of the Confederacy's artillery as well as ship armor. The operation was progressing well. Dahlgren's signal officer remembered, "We were beginning to think we would go right through with the whole program." However, that would soon change.

As Dahlgren searched for a ford on the James, he arrived at the home of Confederate Secretary of War James Seddon. Dahlgren introduced himself to Mrs. Seddon, who knew Dahlgren as a young boy. Despite the mission at hand, the colonel visited with Mrs. Seddon at length, engaging in pleasant conversation over blackberry wine while troopers under his command raided and destroyed nearby houses. Although Mrs. Seddon was hospitable to her guest, her first priority was to the Confederacy, and as one slave brought the wine from the cellar another delivered a warning to Richmond that the Yankees would be approaching. Dahlgren left the Seddon home untouched; however, the outbuildings were destroyed and the command moved on. The delay proved costly.

Dahlgren hoped to cross the James at a nearby ferry, but the heavy rains the previous day and night swelled the river and prohibited its crossing. Unable to cross, Dahlgren could not enter Richmond from the south bank as planned. Frustrated, the colonel ordered his guide, a slave from the area, to be hanged, believing the man purposely deceived him. Dahlgren pushed on toward Richmond and sent riders in search of Kilpatrick, who was to attack the city's northern defenses. They, however, were captured, and Mitchell's detachment sent forward to Richmond, rejoined Dahlgren's main column in mid-afternoon.

While resting his horses and men, Dahlgren briefed his subordinates on the plan to attack Richmond, free the prisoners on Belle Isle, and "capture the city, its officials and archives." The plan to free the prisoners became more complex and ominous, as Dahlgren now talked of targeting members of the Confederate government.

The sound of guns to the east alerted Dahlgren's men to Kilpatrick's attack, which had actually begun six hours earlier despite no sign of Dahlgren's column. That evening, Kilpatrick interpreted the sound of nearby train whistles as enemy reinforcements arriving on the field. That, and a fierce attack by Confederate cavalry, convinced Kilpatrick that he would be unable to enter the city. He disengaged and withdrew toward Gen. Benjamin Butler's Union command on the Peninsula to the east and away from Dahlgren on the

opposite side of the city.

Dahlgren's column crossed Richmond's outer defenses before being fired upon by Confederate home guard defenders. Obstructions slowed the Federal advance and stiff Rebel resistance eventually pushed them back, despite the initial loss of considerable ground to the Yankees. Dahlgren's men retired in "good order" while their young colonel decided how best to proceed in the face of failing at three objectives – crossing the James and liberating the prisoners, entering and ransacking Richmond, and linking up with Kilpatrick's command. Determined not to completely fail, he strategized for another push on the city – a plan he immediately withheld from his lieutenants who found themselves wandering aimlessly through the pitch-black night toward the Richmond's northern defenses.

Dahlgren's efforts to break through proved futile. The cold rain that fell on his column ended the following morning, March 2, as the remaining one hundred men arrived at the flooded Pamunkey River, crossed, and continued on. Monitoring the enemy closely, the Confederates pursued and concocted a plan to ambush the Federals, which they did that evening. As the exhausted, rain-soaked Federal troopers moved through the darkness, a thunderous concussion of small arms opened at their front. Dahlgren, mounted at the head of the column, was killed instantly by numerous gunshot wounds. Those not killed or unable to escape were taken to Richmond and added to the ranks of prisoners they set out to liberate three days earlier.

Given the potential of the Kilpatrick-Dahlgren raid the lack of planning was surprising. Only twelve days passed from Kilpatrick's meeting in Washington to the start of the operation on the evening of February 28. The lynchpin to the success was Dahlgren; however, he was young and inexperienced despite his rank. It is likely his political connections led to his role and not a talent or ability at conducting such an operation. He had never commanded a force greater than one hundred men in combat, let alone a force with the task to raid the enemy capital, destroy its war fighting capability, and liberate ten thousand prisoners held there. Furthermore, the success of the operation hinged on secrecy, yet little effort was made to maintain it and, therefore, the ever-critical element of surprise was forfeited.

The Kilpatrick-Dahlgren raid confirmed for the Confederates the vulnerability of keeping so many Federal prisoners in Richmond. Camp Sumter in Georgia, more infamously known as Andersonville, began receiving Union prisoners from Richmond at the end of February 1864. By summer, Andersonville would hold 33,000 Union prisoners of war, nearly three times the number held in Richmond.



# Regional issues, global implications Sovereign Challenge focus

*By Mike Bottoms*  
*USSOCOM Public Affairs*

Regional issues and their global implications were the topics of discussion at U.S. Special Operations Command's fifth annual Sovereign Challenge 2010 Conference, March 8 to 11, in Key West, Fla.

More than 90 people representing 65 countries, from military officials to foreign defense and police attaches, focused their attention on creating strategies to combat terrorism by studying successful regional counterterrorism programs.

The conference featured noted speakers to include Adm. Eric T. Olson, commander USSOCOM, bestselling author Greg Mortensen, Dr. Richard Falkenrath, deputy commissioner, New York Police Department for Counterterrorism, former American Ambassador Dell Dailey, Maj. Gen. Salvatore Cambria, director, Inter-Agency Task Force, USSOCOM, and Thomas Howes, an American Northrop Grumman employee who was captured by the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and was held hostage from Feb. 13, 2003, to July 2, 2008. International guest speakers included French Judge Jean-Louis Bruguière, Walid Phares, a Lebanese American scholar born in Beirut, professor and commentator on global terrorism and Middle Eastern affairs, and an Iranian speaker who gave an insider's view of Iran.

Olson opened the conference by introducing Mortensen as an important, positive influence in Pakistan and Afghanistan.

"He has a fascinating personal story, a fascinating story of service, particularly to the girls of Pakistan and Afghanistan. He has a fascinating way of presenting it," Olson said. "I think you will be captured by him and what he has to say."

According to Mortensen his organization has built more than 131 schools in Pakistan and Afghanistan.

"They are educating fifty-eight thousand children in Pakistan and Afghanistan. Forty-eight thousand of those are girls," Olson said. "He is making a real difference; he has

been recognized by governments, by universities, by charitable organizations."

Mortensen explained the importance of listening to what the people want and displaying genuine respect to the people when going into a region and trying to provide aid.

"The first thing is that we need to listen more. It's about listening. My father taught me the same thing, that, you know, often we have an idea or goal, but we need to listen," said Mortensen. "The second is about respect. I find that, having grown up in East Africa and working in Pakistan and Afghanistan, that a key to any process is civility and respect, also especially respect for elders. And number three building relationships or drinking tea. Now, we can't just go drinking tea around the world and having peace, but it is imperative that we have to establish relationships."

Through his humanitarian efforts, Mortensen's uses an indirect approach to combat terrorism. Falkenrath from the New York City Police Department gave a lecture on some of the more direct approaches to combating terrorism.

"We had an idea to invite somebody from the New York City Police Department Office of Counter-Terrorism, knowing full well that many of you come from large cities, many of your cities have been targets or a number of your cities have been targets of terrorist activity," said Stan Schrager, Sovereign Challenge coordinator.

Falkenrath explained his department has been successful against terrorism because they have exceptional language capabilities.

"We have four-hundred, we'd say, that speak the key languages we care most about, mainly Pashtu, Urdu, Farsi, Dari and Arabic, the ones that I have to concern myself with most. And this is very helpful for us when we work cases jointly with the Federal government, which we do all the time."

Sovereign Challenge is a strategic communication international engagement project focusing on the sovereignty of independent nations and how terrorism threatens sovereignty. A collaborative website has been developed and is located at [www.sovereignchallenge.org](http://www.sovereignchallenge.org). Transcripts from all the speakers at this year's conference can be downloaded at the Sovereign Challenge Web site.

**SPECIAL OPERATORS WHO LOST THEIR LIVES  
SERVING IN AND PREPARING FOR  
OPERATIONS ENDURING FREEDOM, IRAQI FREEDOM  
AND OVERSEAS CONTINGENCY OPERATIONS  
WILL NEVER BE FORGOTTEN.**



Navy Chief Petty Officer (SEAL)  
Adam L. Brown  
Naval Special Warfare Command



Army Sgt.  
Joel D. Clarkson  
75th Ranger Regiment



Marine Gunnery Sgt.  
Robert Gilbert II  
2d Marine Special Operations Battalion



Army Sgt. 1st Class  
David J. Hartman  
95th Civil Affairs Brigade



Army Cpl.  
Michael D. Jankiewicz  
75th Ranger Regiment



Air Force Senior Master Sgt.  
James B. Lackey  
8th Special Operations Squadron



Army Staff Sgt.  
James R. Patton  
75th Ranger Regiment



Army Sgt. 1st Class  
Matthew S. Slusstilller  
95th Civil Affairs Brigade



Army Staff Sgt.  
Mark A. Stets Jr.  
4th Psychological Operations Group

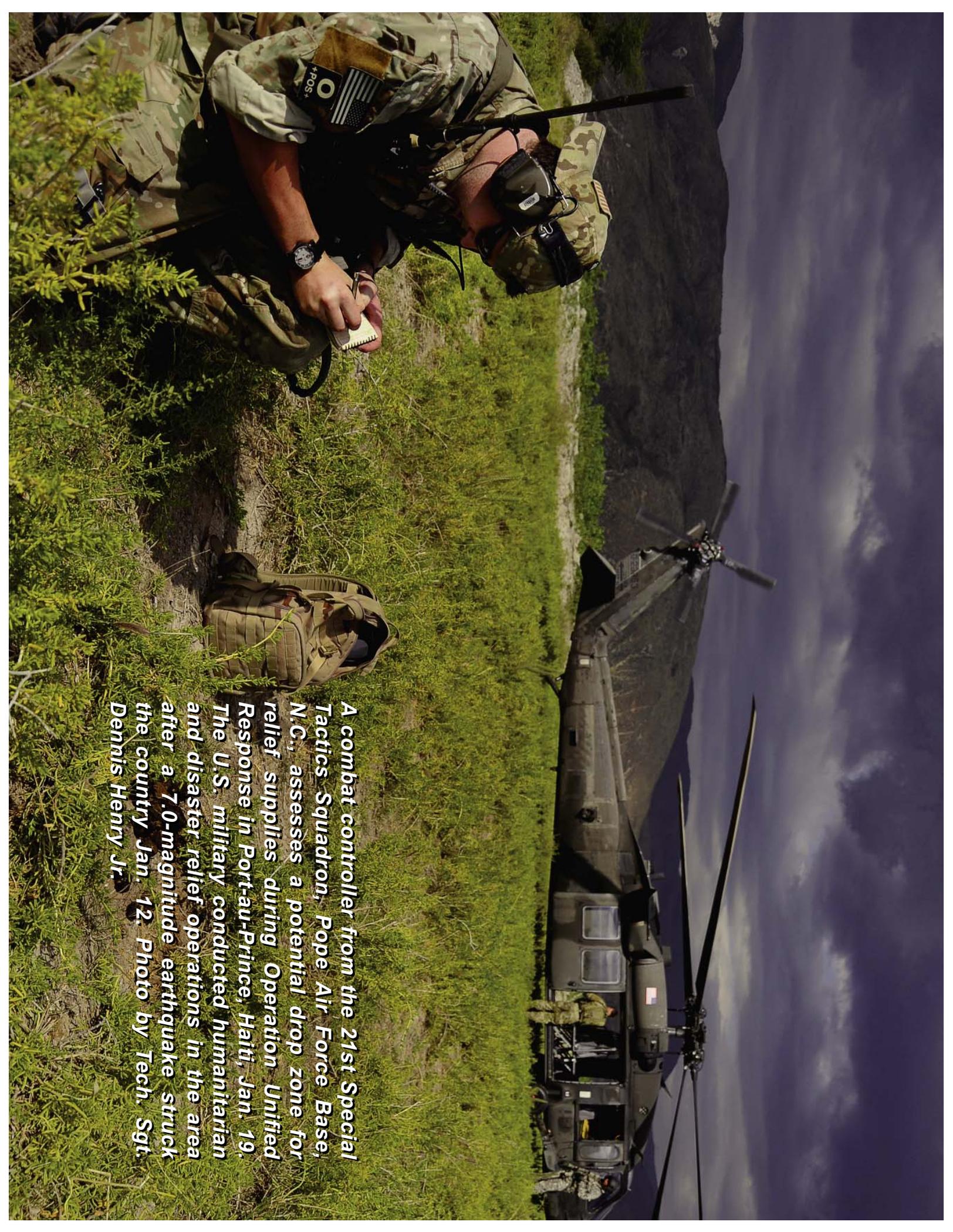


Air Force Major  
Randall D. Voas  
8th Special Operations Squadron



Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class (SEAL)  
Ronald T. Woodle  
SEAL Team 4

**Editor's note: Honored are SOF who lost their lives  
since January's Tip of the Spear.**

A combat controller in camouflage gear is kneeling in a field, writing in a notebook. He is wearing a watch and has a patch on his chest that says "+POS" and "O". A military helicopter is visible in the background, and a backpack is on the ground next to him.

**A combat controller from the 21st Special Tactics Squadron, Pope Air Force Base, N.C., assesses a potential drop zone for relief supplies during Operation Unified Response in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, Jan. 19. The U.S. military conducted humanitarian and disaster relief operations in the area after a 7.0-magnitude earthquake struck the country Jan. 12. Photo by Tech. Sgt. Dennis Henry Jr.**